



Morning Prayer

Seventh Sunday of Easter

24th May 2020

An Order for Morning Prayer on Sunday

24 May 2020

Seventh Sunday of Easter

† Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Prayers of Penitence

Christ our passover lamb has been sacrificed for us.
Let us therefore rejoice by putting away all malice and evil
and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

cf 1 Corinthians 5.7,8

**Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us**

**and restore to us the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the Father of all mercies
cleanse us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessed is the Lord,
for he has heard the voice of our prayer;

Therefore shall our hearts dance for joy
and in our song will we praise our God.

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
creator and redeemer of all;
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world.
and in your great love fashioned us in your image.
Now, through the deep waters of death,
you have brought your people to new birth
by raising your Son to life in triumph.
May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts
as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
Blessed be God for ever.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

Amen.

† The Word of God

Psalmody

Psalm 68.1-10,32-35

- 1 Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered;
let those that hate him flee before him.
- 2 As the smoke vanishes, so may they vanish away;
as wax melts at the fire,
so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.
- 3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
let them make merry with gladness.
- 4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
exalt him who rides on the clouds.
The Lord is his name; rejoice before him.
- 5 Father of the fatherless, defender of widows,
God in his holy habitation!
- 6 God gives the solitary a home
and brings forth prisoners to songs of welcome,
but the rebellious inhabit a burning desert.
- 7 O God, when you went forth before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness,
- 8 The earth shook and the heavens dropped down rain,
at the presence of God, the Lord of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
- 9 You sent down a gracious rain, O God;
you refreshed your inheritance when it was weary.
- 10 Your people came to dwell there;
in your goodness, O God, you provide for the poor.
- 32 Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth;
make music in praise of the Lord;
- 33 He rides on the ancient heaven of heavens
and sends forth his voice, a mighty voice.

- 34 Ascribe power to God, whose splendour is over Israel,
whose power is above the clouds.
- 35 How terrible is God in his holy sanctuary,
the God of Israel, who gives power and strength to his people!
Blessed be God.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:
and shall be for ever. Amen.

First Reading

Acts 1.6-14

⁶When the apostles had come together, they asked Jesus, ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?’ ⁷He replied, ‘It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Old Testament Cantic

The Song of Moses and Miriam

Exodus 15.1b-3,6,10,13,17

- 1 I will sing to the Lord, who has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.
- 2 The Lord is my strength and my song
and has become my salvation.
- 3 This is my God whom I will praise
the God of my forebears whom I will exalt.
- 4 The Lord is a warrior,
the Lord is his name.
- 5 Your right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power:
your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.
- 6 At the blast of your nostrils, the sea covered them;
they sank as lead in the mighty waters.
- 7 In your unfailing love, O Lord,
you lead the people whom you have redeemed.
- 8 And by your invincible strength
you will guide them to your holy dwelling.
- 9 You will bring them in and plant them, O Lord,
in the sanctuary which your hands have established.

Exodus 15.1b-3,6,10,13,17

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Second Reading

John 17.1-11

¹Jesus looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The reading may be followed by a time of silence.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead

And Christ shall give you light.

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.

Set your minds on things that are above,

not on things that are on the earth.

And Christ shall give you light.

When Christ our life appears you will appear with him in glory.
**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give you light.**

Gospel Cantic

Benedictus

- 1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,
who has come to his people and set them free.
- 2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,
born of the house of his servant David.
- 3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,
- 4 To show mercy to our ancestors,
and to remember his holy covenant.
- 5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
- 6 Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.
- 7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
- 8 To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
- 9 In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- 10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Sermon (There is a reflection at the end of this booklet)

The Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

¶ Prayers

Let us pray to God,
who alone makes us dwell in safety:

We pray for all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or
isolation or anxiety, that they may find relief and recovery:

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

As we look for the way out of this crisis we pray for our government, that they may make wise decisions for us to move forward safely.

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

We pray for medical staff that they may have the skill to care for the suffering and for the medical researchers that they may find a cure or vaccine for coronavirus.

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

We pray that you will be with all of our congregation worshipping at this time, that we may be supported by our common prayer and soon return to worshipping together.

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

Grant your comfort and your peace to those dying at this time especially as they are not able to be supported by family and friends as they would be in normal times.

At this time of need

We wait, we watch, we hope, we pray

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

**for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

The Collect is said.

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

† The Conclusion

The Blessing

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.

Amen.

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7th Sunday of Easter

By Bridget Nichols

LIKE most human beings, the disciples liked answers that gave a tidier appearance to the world. The danger in that lies in assuming that questions are simpler than they really are, and consequently ignoring intermediary steps.

In their eager response to Jesus, as he tells them that he will soon stop talking to them “in figures of speech” (John 16.25), they leap forward to a profound commitment: “By this we believe that you came from God” (John 16.30). Jesus knows them all too well. Already Peter has had to be reminded that the most serious promises can be undermined by circumstances (John 13.36-38). Now, all of them are challenged.

Of course, they think that they believe, but things are about to change. The time has come when they will be scattered, leaving Jesus alone (John 16.32).

Anger and disillusionment on Jesus’s part would have been understandable. Instead, his answer is loving reassurance. Extraordinarily, he believes in the disciples as future missionaries and evangelists (John 17.20). He is thus set free to make a series of petitions: for his glorification in God’s presence (John 17.5); for the unity of the disciples that God has given him, and for their protection (John 17.6-19); and for those who will learn the good news from them, and through them glimpse his glory (John 17.20-24).

The first of these prayers is the most perplexing. It refers to glory that belonged to the Son “before the world existed”, and to the glory that will be restored (John 17.1, 5). Yet between them is the uneasiness of the present, and the imminence of a death that will look to the world like the antithesis of glory.

John’s presentation of this last scene before Jesus’s arrest refuses the world’s interpretation. His Jesus has already overcome the world that has rejected him and will persecute his followers, nor will his unity with the Father allow him to be alone (John 16.32b-33). He *chooses* to surrender his life, in what Brendan Byrne calls “free obedience to the mission received from the Father”, having finished the work assigned to him (*Life Abounding*, Liturgical Press, 2014; John 17.4).

The prayer for the disciples, though more direct, moves beyond what Jesus can achieve by his own will. Their fragile unity must grow out of what he has taught his friends about the bond between him and the Father.

It is by no means fully developed (John 17.11, 22-23), however, and, in the immediate aftermath of the crucifixion, it is constituted in fear rather than in any strong sense of a common purpose in proclamation (John 20.19).

Luke paints a different and confident picture of the small body of people who, having witnessed Jesus ascending, prepared themselves with complete concentration for the gift of the Spirit (Acts 1.6-14). Luke Timothy Johnson translates Acts 1.14 to describe the gathering in the upper room as “united as they continued in prayer”, which gives a rather different emphasis from the NRSV’s “constantly devoting themselves to prayer” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, Liturgical Press, 1992).

This unity is the preparation for mission and evangelism which will burst into life at Pentecost (Acts 2), and it is made more remarkable by the presence of Jesus’s mother and brothers. Here are two sets of people who might have asserted independent claims as interpreters of Jesus, waiting faithfully for the inspiration that will empower them to tell one story, capable of reaching an audience of many nations and languages (Acts 2.5-11).

Johnson offers a particular insight into Mary’s presence: as she was “overshadowed” by the Spirit at the incarnation, so now she will receive the Spirit of prophecy as a “daughter of Jerusalem” (Acts 2.17; Joel 2.17-21).

The First Letter of Peter moves towards its close with advice on how to preserve unity under threat. The communities that received the letter were probably suffering verbal rather than physical abuse, but the damage of such assaults over a period of time can be significant in a way that may not be obvious when we hear, in one of the readings for compline, of the “adversary” who prowls “like a roaring lion” (1 Peter 5.8-9).

The promise of a share in the “eternal glory” of God for those who stand firm is now beautifully incorporated in a blessing used at the end

of the Common Worship rite of Confirmation (1 Peter 5.10). It implies a responsibility: what might we do to extend that promise to embrace the world rather than fleeing from the world? In the days between the Ascension and Pentecost, we are challenged to unite in making that the focus of prayer